

We claim:

1. A method of maintaining physical location association with an IP telephony instrument, comprising the steps of:

5 detecting a change of an Ethernet MAC address on a switch port;
notifying an IP telephony call controller of said change;
sending at least one information prompt from the IP telephony call controller to the IP telephony instrument;
10 receiving a response to said at least one information prompt, said response including a physical location of said IP telephony instrument; and
maintaining said physical location in association with said IP telephony instrument.

15 2. The method of maintaining physical location association according to claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

flagging the Ethernet MAC address within the telephony call controller; and
20 determining said IP telephony instrument is in an off-hook condition, prior to the step of sending said at least one information prompt to the IP telephony instrument, wherein said step of sending said at least one information prompt is performed when said IP telephony instrument is in the "off-hook" condition.

25 3. The method of maintaining physical location association according to claim 2, wherein the step of notifying a telephony call controller of said change comprises:

generating a standard network management protocol alarm in response to said change; and
30 sending the SNMP alarm and the physical Ethernet MAC address on the switch port to an IP telephony call controller.

4. The method of maintaining physical location association according to claim 2 wherein the step of notifying a telephony call controller of said change comprises:

5 generating a proprietary message including the Ethernet MAC address; and

sending said proprietary message from the switch to the IP telephony call controller.

10 5. The method of maintaining physical location association according to one of claims 3 and 4 wherein said IP telephony instrument is an IP telephone.

15 6. The method of maintaining physical location association according to one of claims 3 and 4 wherein said at least one information prompt is an audible prompt.

20 7. The method of maintaining physical location association according to claim 6 wherein said response is entered on a keypad of the IP telephony instrument.

25 8. The method of maintaining physical location association according to claim 6 wherein said response is a voice response and said method further comprises the step of converting said response into numeric location information using voice recognition software.

9. A method of maintaining physical location association with an IP telephony instrument having an Ethernet MAC address in an IP system, comprising the steps of:

30 sending at least one information prompt from a call controller to the IP telephony instrument, in response to rebooting of the IP system;

receiving a response to said at least one information prompt, said response including a physical location of said IP telephony instrument; and

5 maintaining said physical location in association with said IP telephony instrument.

10. The method of maintaining physical location association according to claim 9, further comprising the steps of:

10 flagging the Ethernet MAC address within the telephony call controller; and
determining when said IP telephony instrument is in an off-hook condition, prior to the step of sending said at least one information prompt to the IP telephony instrument, wherein said step of sending at least one information prompt is performed when said IP telephony instrument is in the "off-hook" condition.
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